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Letter to the Editor

So Far as We Know, the Man Is Still Dead

THE Embassy of Haiti read with amazement an article written by Virginia Prewett, which said that the Haitian Government recently created in New York an organization called "International Squad" for the purpose of spying on Haitian exiles.

That information, as well as her comments, is completely whimsical and entirely without foundations.

For the time being there is no climate of terror in Haiti. The country is calm and is working peacefully under the leadership of its President who enjoys the full support of the Haitian people which just renewed once more to him its confidence. . . .

Visitors returning from Haiti unanimously pay homage to the well known Haitian hospitality, to restored internal peace, and to the efforts made by its President to improve the social, political and economic conditions of his people.

President Duvalier made excellent studies at the University of Michigan, is a sincere admirer and friend of the United States. He had never ceased to co-operate in strengthening the Regional System and to work

with other States of the Continent towards preventing the infiltration of the communist ideology, which is a threat to the stability of the democratic institutions of the Western Hemisphere. Some Haitian exile groups are the protagonists of this pernicious doctrine.

It is regrettable that Miss Prewett associated herself with these groups in order to obtain her information.

ANDRE THEARD

Ambassador of Haiti

(NOTE: Miss Prewett wrote that M. Joseph Thevenin, a Haitian on a visit to New York, spoke in casual criticism of President Duvalier in a barber-shop frequented by Haitians; that on his return home, he was seized and beaten at the Port-au-Prince airport; that he vanished in the custody of Haitian authorities and has since been reported dead by reliable Haitian exile sources.

The Ambassador's letter denies none of this.

It is understandable that the Haitian ambassador, ex-officio, must defend the Haitian dictatorship. Since that regime does not allow press freedom in Haiti, a fact fully confirmed by the

Letters to the Editor, to be considered for publication, must bear the writer's name, address and phone number. Names will be withheld if the writer so requests. Please keep letters brief. The Editor reserves the right to cut them.

Inter American Press Association, Miss Prewett must seek information from the best sources otherwise available.

If the Haitian government wishes to controvert M. Thevenin's death, it could show to an American consul, accompanied by someone who can identify M. Thevenin, M. Thevenin alive. Miss Prewett says she will gladly acknowledge that the report she received of his death is mistaken, if this can be done.

As to the Ambassador's description of Dr. Duvalier's devotion to the United States, its policies, its ideals, and to democracy in general, that is utter nonsense. Dr. Duvalier is, to our personal, first-hand knowledge, a dictator who is as devoted an enemy to decent representative government with guaranteed civil liberties as he is to communism. He opposes both, not as ideologies, but merely as political rivals to his own established police state. (Ed.)